Water Orton Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

1. Introduction

The basic principles underpinning this policy are those contained in the Education Act 1996, Sections 449-462, reinforced by Warwickshire County Council policy:

No charge can be made for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours.
- a) Education provided outside school hours when this is part of the national curriculum; b) music tuition, when this is part of the national curriculum; or c) educational or residential visits outside school hours; if any of these are required as part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's religious education curriculum.

A charge can be made for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes the child to own them.
- Optional extras:
  - education (or educational / residential visits) provided outside school hours (or mainly outside school hours), with the exception of the above conditions;
  - examination entry fees if the pupil has not been prepared for the examination at school;
  - transport, other than that required to take a pupil to school or to other premises where LA / Governing Body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
  - board and lodging on a residential visit.
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances
  - The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allowed the DCSF to specify circumstances where charging can be made for musical tuition.
  - Charges may be made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of pupils to play a musical instrument or to sing, providing the teaching is not an essential part of the national curriculum, part of a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Voluntary contributions:

Schools are entitled to invite voluntary contributions (financial or in kind) for the benefit of the school or any school activities. Participation in activities funded by voluntary contributions cannot be restricted to those

willing or able to pay. While voluntary contributions are - by definition - voluntary, activities which rely on such contributions to be financially viable will not proceed unless the level of voluntary support is adequate. This will be made clear to parents when a voluntary contribution is requested.

2. Charging

2.1 Activities in school hours:
Non-residential activities organised by the school and taking place in school hours are provided free of charge. This includes supply of materials, books, instruments, other equipment, educational visits in school hours, and transport provided in school hours by the LA or the school to carry pupils between school and an activity. School hours are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the day. If most of an activity occurs during school hours that activity is deemed as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge will be made for the activity or the travel. For rules to calculate whether an activity is judged as taking place in school hours, refer to 'Guide to the Law for School Governors'.

For **residential activities** organised by the school, deemed to take place in school hours, or to deliver activities required to meet curriculum requirements, only the cost of board and lodgings will be charged. For pupils whose parents are in receipt of specified benefits remissions will apply, see below.

2.2 Activities outside school hours:
With the exception of activities necessary to satisfy curriculum requirements, all activities organised by the school and deemed to take place outside school hours will be charged in full. Participation by any pupil shall be on the basis of parental choice, and prior parental consent is therefore essential.

2.3 Activities organised by other agencies:
Where an organisation, acting independently of the school or the LA, arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their child to take part, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must ask the school to agree to their child being 'absent'. Where an activity is organised by a third party, is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school it is deemed to be provided by the school and no charge will be made.

2.4 Transport
Under normal circumstances, no charge shall be made for transport provided in school hours for educational activities. However, it is recognised that the cost of transport may well constitute a significant percentage of the total cost of an activity, and voluntary contributions will be sought.

2.5 Music Tuition
Class music tuition in school hours, music tuition forming part of the syllabus, and group musical activities out of school hours for school orchestra purposes, will be provided free of charge.
Any individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument, either in or out of school hours, and any group tuition provided out of school hours (for other than school orchestra purposes) shall be charged for, based on the rate set by County Music Service. Such charges shall apply irrespective of whether instruments are provided by the school or supplied by the individual(s). In cases of hardship, it may be decided to remit all or part of the charge (see "Remissions").

2.6 Materials and Consumables
Materials, books and equipment used during school hours as part of the syllabus shall be provided free of charge. However, parents may be invited to provide their children voluntarily with particular items, in order to release resources from the school budget for other purposes.
Charges may be made for ingredients or materials where parents have indicated in advance a willingness to own the finished product. Again, voluntary contributions are acceptable.

2.7 Calculation of charges
- In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount will be included in relation to:
  - any materials, books, instruments or equipment, transport, board or lodging provided in connection with the optional extra;
  - non-teaching staff
  - teaching staff (including supply teachers) engaged specifically under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (a 'contract' can simply be in the form of a letter asking the member of staff to provide a service on a particular occasion);

- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument where the tuition is an optional extra.
- Parental agreement is required for provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.
- Where a charge is made, parents will be informed how the charge has been worked out and who will qualify for help with the cost.
- The charge made will not exceed the actual cost.
- Guidance prohibits charges with any element of subsidy to cover the cost of participating pupils whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- If further funds need to be raised, for example to help in hardship cases, this will be raised by general fund raising or specific grants.

2.8 Breakages and Fines

In the event of loss of school property, damage or defacement of school equipment, buildings or grounds, and where this loss or damage is considered to be attributable to a pupil's behaviour or negligence, the school reserves the right to seek recompense from parents.

3. Voluntary Contributions

In accordance with its rights under legislation, the school will seek voluntary contributions for certain activities.

Participation in activities funded by voluntary contributions will not be restricted to those willing or able to pay. Activities which rely on such contributions to be financially viable will not proceed unless the level of voluntary support is adequate. This will be made clear to parents when a voluntary contribution is requested.

Decisions about voluntary contributions will be made by the Headteacher in conjunction with the Human Resources and Finance sub-committee of the governing body, who will determine the minimum level of contribution required in order for the activity to proceed.

Parents are encouraged to make voluntary contributions (financial or in kind) to the school fund as frequently and generously as possible, in order to maximise the opportunities for all pupils to participate in activities to enhance their education.

4. Remissions

In cases of hardship, remission on charges for an activity will be considered. The level of remission shall be determined by the Headteacher in conjunction with the Finance sub-committee of the governing body, and may be as high as 100%. The possibility of remission on charges will be made clear when parents are informed about a forthcoming visit.

For residential visits, parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits (i.e. those who are entitled to free school meals) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support;
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the limit (specified annually).
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance (introduced 2008)

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